

CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

LRD Residential Development at
Pope's Hill, Blackpool, Cork.

March 2026

CUNNANE STRATTON REYNOLDS
LAND PLANNING & DESIGN
www.csrlandplan.ie

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL

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LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL

1.1 Introduction

The Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared by CSR was informed by a desktop study and a survey of the site and receiving environment in September and December 2024. The appraisal is in accordance with the methodology prescribed in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition, 2013 (GLVIA) published by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment and the relevant updates and Clarifications as issued by the Landscape Institute.

This report identifies and discusses the landscape and visual constraints, and likely effects in relation to the proposed residential development at Pope's Hill, Blackpool, Cork.

1.2 Methodology

Ireland is a signatory to the European Landscape Convention (ELC). The ELC defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'. This definition is important in that it expands beyond the idea that landscape is only a matter of aesthetics and visual amenity. It encourages a focus on landscape as a resource in its own right - a shared resource providing a complex range of cultural, environmental, and economic benefits to individuals and society.

As a cultural resource, the landscape functions as the setting for our day-to-day lives, also providing opportunities for recreation and aesthetic enjoyment and inspiration. It contributes to the sense of place experienced by individuals and communities and provides a link to the past as a record of historic socio-economic and environmental conditions. As an environmental resource, the landscape provides habitat for fauna and flora. It receives, stores, conveys, and cleans water, and vegetation in the landscape stores carbon and produces oxygen. As an economic resource, the landscape provides the raw materials and space for the production of food, materials (e.g., timber, aggregates) and energy (e.g., carbon-based fuels, wind, solar), living space and for recreation and tourism activities.

1.2.1 Forces for Landscape Change

The GLVIA notes that change in the landscape is ongoing. Many different pressures have progressively altered familiar landscapes over time and will continue to do so in the future, creating new landscapes. For example, within the receiving environment, the environs of the proposed development have altered over the last thousand years, from wilderness to agriculture and settlement.

Many of the drivers for change arise from the requirement for development to meet the needs of a growing population and economy. The concept of sustainable development recognises that change must and will occur to meet the needs of the present, but that it should not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This involves finding an appropriate balance between economic, social, and environmental forces and values.

The reversibility of change is an important consideration. If change must occur to meet a current need, it is essential to distinguish whether this could be reversed to return the resource (in this case, the landscape) to its previous state to allow for development or management for future needs.

Climate change is one of the major factors likely to bring about future change in the landscape, and it is accepted to be the most serious long-term threat to the natural environment, as well as economic activity (particularly primary production) and society. The need for climate change mitigation and adaptation, which includes the management of water and more extreme weather and rainfall patterns, is part of this.

1.2.2 Guidance

Landscape and Visual Appraisal is a tool used to identify the effects of change resulting from appraisal of both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right, people's views, and visual amenity. As this report is not part of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EiAR), and is instead a standalone Landscape and Visual Appraisal, the report does not include a statement of the significance

of effects. However, the process by which the landscape and visual effects are identified is similar to that of a Landscape and Visual Assessment carried out as part of an EIAR.

The methodology is informed by the following key guidance documents, namely:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013, published by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (hereafter referred to as the GLVIA).
- Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (Draft August 2017, EPA).

References are also made to the '*Landscape and Landscape Assessment – Consultation Draft of Guidelines for Planning Authorities*' document, published in 2000 by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

Use of the Term 'Effect' vs 'Impact'

The GLVIA advises that the terms 'impact' and 'effect' should be clearly distinguished and consistently used in the preparation of an LVIA.

'*Impact*' is defined as the action being taken. In the case of the proposed works, the impact would include the construction of the proposed extension.

'*Effect*' is defined as the change or changes resulting from those actions, e.g., a change in landscape character, or changes to the composition, character, and quality of views in the receiving environment. This report focusses on these effects.

1.2.3 Assessment of Both 'Landscape' and 'Visual' Effects

Another key distinction to make in a LVIA is that between landscape effects and the visual effects of development.

'*Landscape*' results from the interplay between the physical, natural, and cultural components of our surroundings. Different combinations of these elements and their spatial distribution create distinctive character of landscape in different places. 'Landscape character assessment' is the method used in LVIA to describe landscape, and by which to understand the potential effects of a development on the landscape as 'a resource'. Character is not just about the physical elements and features that make up a landscape, but also embraces the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential aspects of landscape that make a place distinctive.

Views and '*visual amenity*' refer to the interrelationship between people and the landscape. The GLVIA prescribes that effects on views and visual amenity should be assessed separately from landscape, although the two topics are inherently linked. Visual assessment is concerned with changes that arise in the composition of available views, the response of people to these changes and the overall effects on the area's visual amenity.

The appraisal of landscape and visual effects included a desktop study, review of the proposed development drawings and visualisations, and a site visit which was carried out in April 2024 and May 2025.

1.2.4 Methodology for Landscape Appraisal

Landscape appraisal considers the sensitivity of the receptor, and the likely nature and magnitude of the changes to the main landscape elements and characteristics. Existing trends of change in the landscape are taken into account.

Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource

Landscape Sensitivity: Landscape sensitivity is a function of its land use, landscape patterns and scale, visual enclosure and distribution of visual receptors, scope for mitigation, and the value placed

on the landscape. It also relates to the nature and scale of development proposed. It includes consideration of landscape values as well as the susceptibility of the landscape to change.

Landscape values can be identified by the presence of landscape designations or policies which indicate particular values, either on a national or local level. In addition, a number of criteria are used to assess the value of a landscape. These are described further in Section 1.6 below.

Landscape susceptibility is defined in the GLVIA as *the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline scenario and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies*. Susceptibility also relates to the type of development – a landscape may be highly susceptible to certain types of development but have a low susceptibility to other types of development.

For the purpose of assessment, three categories are used to classify the landscape sensitivity of the receiving environment.

Sensitivity is therefore a combination of Landscape value and Susceptibility.

Sensitivity	Description
High	Areas where the landscape exhibits strong, positive character with valued elements, features, and characteristics. The character of the landscape is such that it has limited/low capacity for accommodating change in the form of development. These attributes are recognised in landscape policy or designations as being of national, regional, or county value and the principal management objective for the area is conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features, or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong. The character of the landscape is such that there is some capacity for change in the form of development. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.
Low	Areas where the landscape has few valued elements, features or characteristics and the character is weak. The character of the landscape is such that it has capacity for change; where development would result in a minor change or would make a positive change. Such landscapes are generally unrecognised in policy and where the principal management objective is to facilitate change through development, repair, restoration, or enhancement.

Table 1.1 – Categories of Landscape Sensitivity

Magnitude of Landscape Change: The magnitude of change is a factor of the scale, extent and degree of change imposed on the landscape with reference to its key elements, features, and characteristics (also known as 'landscape receptors'). Four categories are used to classify magnitude of landscape change.

Magnitude of Change	Description
High	Change that is moderate to large in extent, resulting in major alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape and/or introduction of large elements considered uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.
Medium	Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may

	be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.
Low	Change that is moderate or limited in scale, resulting in minor alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in minor change to the character of the landscape.
Negligible	Change that is limited in scale, resulting in no alteration to key elements, features or characteristics of the landscape key elements features or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that are characteristic of the context. Such development results in no change to the landscape character.

Table 1.2 – Categories of Landscape Change

Landscape Effects

A conclusion on the relative importance of landscape effects (either on physical landscape elements or on the landscape character) can be arrived at by combining the landscape sensitivity and the magnitude of change. This is illustrated in Figure 1.1 below.

As this report is not part of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR), and is instead a standalone Landscape and Visual Appraisal, the report does not include a statement of the significance of effects.

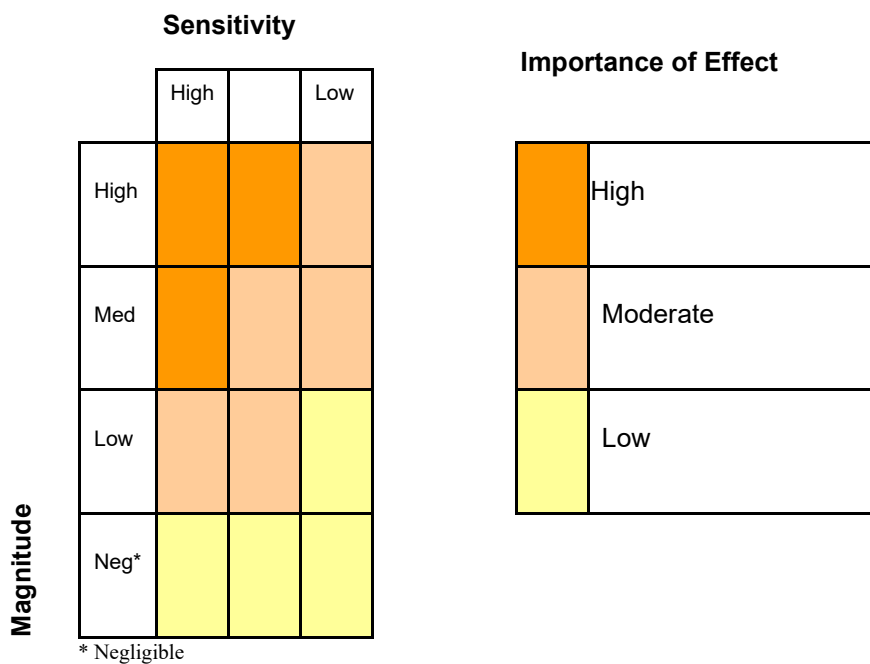


Figure 1.1: Guide to the classification of the level of effects

Landscape effects are also classified as positive, neutral, or negative/adverse. Development has the potential to improve the environment as well as damage it. In certain situations, there might be policy encouraging a type of change in the landscape, and if a development achieves the objective of the policy the resulting effect might be positive, even if the landscape character is profoundly changed.

1.2.5 Methodology for Visual Appraisal

Visual appraisal considers the changes to the composition of views, the character of the views, and the visual amenity experienced by visual receptors. Visual receptor sensitivity is a function of two main considerations:

- *Susceptibility of the visual receptor to change.* This depends on the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention or interest is focussed on the views or visual amenity they experience at that location.

Visual receptors most susceptible to change include frequent users (such as students and faculty), residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation focused on the landscape (e.g. trail users), and visitors to heritage or other attractions and places of community congregation where the setting contributes to the experience.

Visual receptors less susceptible to change include travellers on road, rail, and other transport routes (unless on recognised scenic routes which would be more susceptible, people engaged in outdoor recreation or sports where the surrounding landscape does not influence the experience, and people in their place of work or shopping where the setting does not influence their experience.

- *Value attached to the view.* This depends to a large extent on the subjective opinion of the visual receptor but also on factors such as policy and designations (e.g. scenic routes, protected views), or the view or setting being associated with a heritage asset, visitor attraction or having some other cultural status (e.g. by appearing in arts).

Three categories are used to classify a viewpoint's sensitivity:

Sensitivity	Description
High	Viewers at viewpoints that are recognised in policy or otherwise designated as being of value, or viewpoints that are highly valued by people that experience them regularly (such as views from houses / frequently used buildings or outdoor recreation features) and views which are valued by the local community. This would include tourist attractions, and heritage features of regional or county value, and viewers travelling on scenic routes.
Medium	Viewers at viewpoints representing people travelling at slow or moderate speed through or past the affected landscape in cars or on public transport, where they are partly but not entirely focused on the landscape, or where the landscape has some valued views. The views are generally not designated, but which include panoramic views or views judged to be of some scenic quality, which demonstrate some sense of naturalness, tranquillity, or some rare element in the view.
Low	Viewers at viewpoints reflecting people involved in activities not focused on the landscape e.g. people at their place of work or engaged in similar activities such as shopping, etc. The view may present an attractive backdrop to these activities but there is no evidence of that the view is valued, and not regarded as an important element of these activities. Viewers travelling at high speeds (e.g. motorways) may also be considered of low susceptibility.

Table 1.3 – Categories of Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Magnitude of Change	Description
High	Extensive intrusion of the development in the view, or partial intrusion that obstructs valued features, or introduction of elements that may be considered uncharacteristic in the context, to the extent that the development becomes co-dominant with other elements in the composition and affects the character of the view and the visual amenity.
Medium	Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in

	change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.
Low	Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.
Negligible	Barely discernible intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are characteristic in the context, resulting in slight change to the composition of the view and no change in visual amenity.

Table 1.4 – Magnitude of Visual Change

Visual Effects

A conclusion on the relative importance of visual effects can be arrived at by combining the visual receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of change. This is included in Figure 1.1 above as for Landscape Effects.

As this report is not part of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report, and is instead a standalone Landscape and Visual Appraisal, the report does not include a statement of the significance of effects.

Visual effects are also classified as positive, neutral, or negative/adverse as set out below:

Quality and Timescale of Effects

The predicted effects are also classified as beneficial, neutral, or adverse. This is not an absolute exercise; in particular, visual receptors' attitudes to development, and thus their response to the impact of a development, will vary. However, the methodology applied is designed to provide robust justification for the conclusions drawn. These qualitative impacts/effects are defined as:

- Adverse – Scheme at variance with landform, scale, pattern. Would degrade, diminish, or destroy the integrity of valued features, elements or their setting or cause the quality of the landscape(townscape)/view to be diminished;
- Neutral - Scheme complements the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape(townscape)/view and maintains landscape quality;
- Beneficial – improves landscape(townscape)/view quality and character, fits with the scale, landform and pattern, and enables the restoration of valued characteristic features or repairs / removes damage caused by existing land uses.

Effects are also categorised according to their longevity or timescale:

- Temporary – Lasting for one year or less;
- Short Term – Lasting one to seven years;
- Medium Term – Lasting seven to fifteen years;
- Long Term – Lasting fifteen years to sixty years;
- Permanent – Lasting over sixty years.

1.3 The Proposed Development

The proposed development will consist of a Large-Scale Residential Development (LRD) on a site at Pope's Hill, Pope's Road, Blackpool, Cork City which will include the demolition of a terrace of 4no. existing dwellings, 3no. of which are derelict, and ancillary sheds and their replacement with 1no. single-

storey 3-bed detached bungalow accessed via a modified private driveway; and the construction of 103no. dwellings to include 50no. townhouses and 53no. duplex apartments. A total of 104no. dwellings are proposed, accessed via Pope's Road. The proposed development will also include a creche with rear garden and front set down area; 104no. car parking spaces and 128no. cycle spaces; internal roads and pathways; hard and soft landscaping, including boundary treatments; retaining walls; 2no. pedestrian connections with Glentrasna Park to the north; and all associated site development, landscaping and boundary treatment, and drainage works, including SuDS.

1.4 Receiving Environment – Policy Context

The following section includes policies and objectives from the Cork City Council Development Plan 2022-28 (hereafter referred as the Plan) which relate to the site zoning, including policies relating to landscape, views and prospects, and green infrastructure.

1.4.1 Cork City Development Plan 2022 – 2028

The following section includes policies and objectives from the Cork City Council Development Plan 2022 - 2028, hereafter referred to as the Plan. These include policies relating to development, landscape character, and viewpoints.

Volume 1

A number of objectives relating to the landscape and developments in general are as follows:

Strategic Objective 5

To strengthen the green and blue infrastructure of Cork City. To protect and promote biodiversity and habitat connectivity and protect natural areas. To protect and enhance Cork City's unique landscape character and maritime heritage. To ensure all of Cork City's residents have access to open spaces, recreation and amenity facilities and natural areas.

A strong green and blue infrastructure network is essential to the quality of life of Cork City's residents and contributes towards the creation of places where people want to live and work. It is an objective of Cork City Council to achieve a healthy, green and connected City with high-quality and interconnected open spaces, parks, diverse natural areas and green and blue corridors.

Proposals for new development in Cork City will respect and reflect the topography, landscape and ecology of the City, and will protect and enhance the City's green and blue infrastructure by ensuring that development does not fragment existing networks of green and blue infrastructure. Proposals for new development will demonstrate how green and blue infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation, landscape and biodiversity are considered commensurate to the scale and context of the development in the development process.

Chapter 6: Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space and Biodiversity

Cork's Landscape:

6.10: *With the intensification of the City, its landscape and natural heritage assets are of huge importance to those living, working and visiting Cork. They are vital to quality of life, are non-renewable assets and help enhance the attractiveness and image of the city as a place to live and work.*

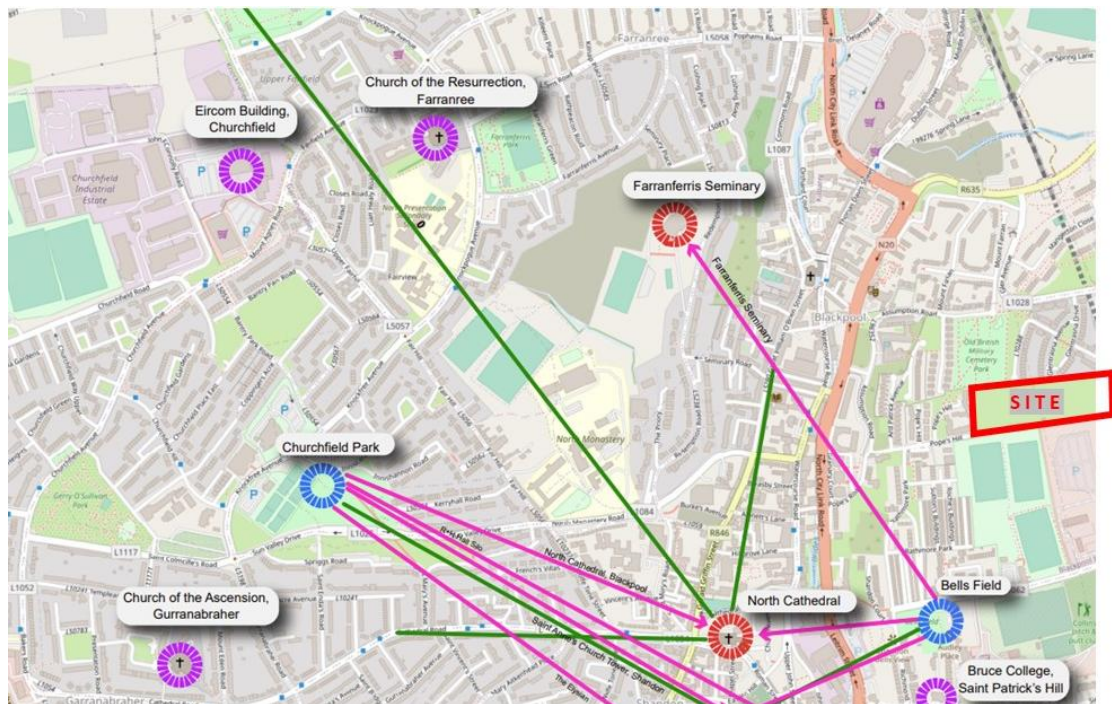
6.11: *Cork City has an attractive physical setting formed by the Lee Valley and Estuary and the ridges rising to the north and south of the city. These features are supplemented by a range of public open spaces, parks, walkways, public and private spaces, trees and tree groups, and together form the green infrastructure of the city, which play a significant role in supporting biodiversity, such as mammals, birds, invertebrates, trees and plants.*

Landscape Protection:

6.17: Cork City Council seeks to protect and enhance the landscape character of the City by protecting the significant landscape elements that contribute to the general amenity of Cork City. This is achieved through a number of land use mechanisms in this Plan, including the designation of Land Preservation Zones (LPZ) and Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV).

6.18: Planning applications within areas or on sites benefiting from such landscape protection must demonstrate that there is no resulting adverse impact on the landscape assets and character of the area, by means of a design statement that includes a landscape assessment and visual impact assessment the impact. The City Council may seek discretionary Environmental Impact Assessments on development proposals that it considers would be likely to have a negative impact on the landscape.

View Management Framework



6.25: Cork City offers a visually striking landscape that combines urban settlements with rivers, ridges, spaces, streets, rural hinterland, as well as fantastic buildings that we are all proud of. The views of Cork that we experience help define our understanding of the City – its character and identity.

6.26: In general, the City is appreciated by most people from viewing locations along the River Lee and its tributaries and from elevated locations.

6.27: Cork City Council seeks to manage development through its View Management Framework in order to protect the views and prospects of special amenity value and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest, where these are not protected by other objectives of this Plan. These views are seen from places that are publicly accessible and well used and include significant buildings or urban landscapes that help to define Cork City at a strategic level.

6.28: *These views represent at least one of the following:*

- 1. Panoramas that offer expansive views of the City.*
- 2. Linear views to landmark buildings.*
- 3. River corridor views.*
- 4. Scenic hinterland routes.*

Active Recreation and Open Space:

6.39: *The quality and quantity of public realm in towns and cities is a key determinant of the quality of life that any place can offer its residents, workers and visitors. Open spaces are a key component of public realm.*

6.44: *The quality of public open spaces is paramount, in terms of design, accessibility, shared use, biodiversity, sustainable urban drainage systems and provision for allotments and community gardens.*

Non-Designated Areas of Natural Heritage Importance

6.66: *Natural heritage and biodiversity of Cork City is not just contained within designated areas alone but is found throughout the City. Many areas which do not have formal protection under legislation have a local natural heritage value in terms of the urban environment in which they are located, the plant and animal life that they support and the biodiversity that lies within them e.g. woodlands, hedgerows, rivers, private gardens, parks, sports grounds graveyards, institutional lands including religious grounds, hospitals, schools and universities.*

Trees and Woodlands

6.69: *Trees and woodlands make a valuable contribution to the biodiversity, landscape value of and health and well-being of its citizens as well as playing a role in climate adaptation and enhancing the aesthetics of the built environment and public realm thus benefiting the environmental, social and economic wellbeing of Cork City's residents.*

6.70: *It is important to protect and maintain existing trees or groups of trees in the City, particularly those in private ownership and promoting new planting on public land. As set out in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, woodland habitat in Cork City is predominantly located in the north western fringe of the wider city, within the hinterland, Tower and Blarney and along the boundary fringe at Glanmire and Rochestown. Tree canopy coverage is estimated to be 14% in Cork City.*

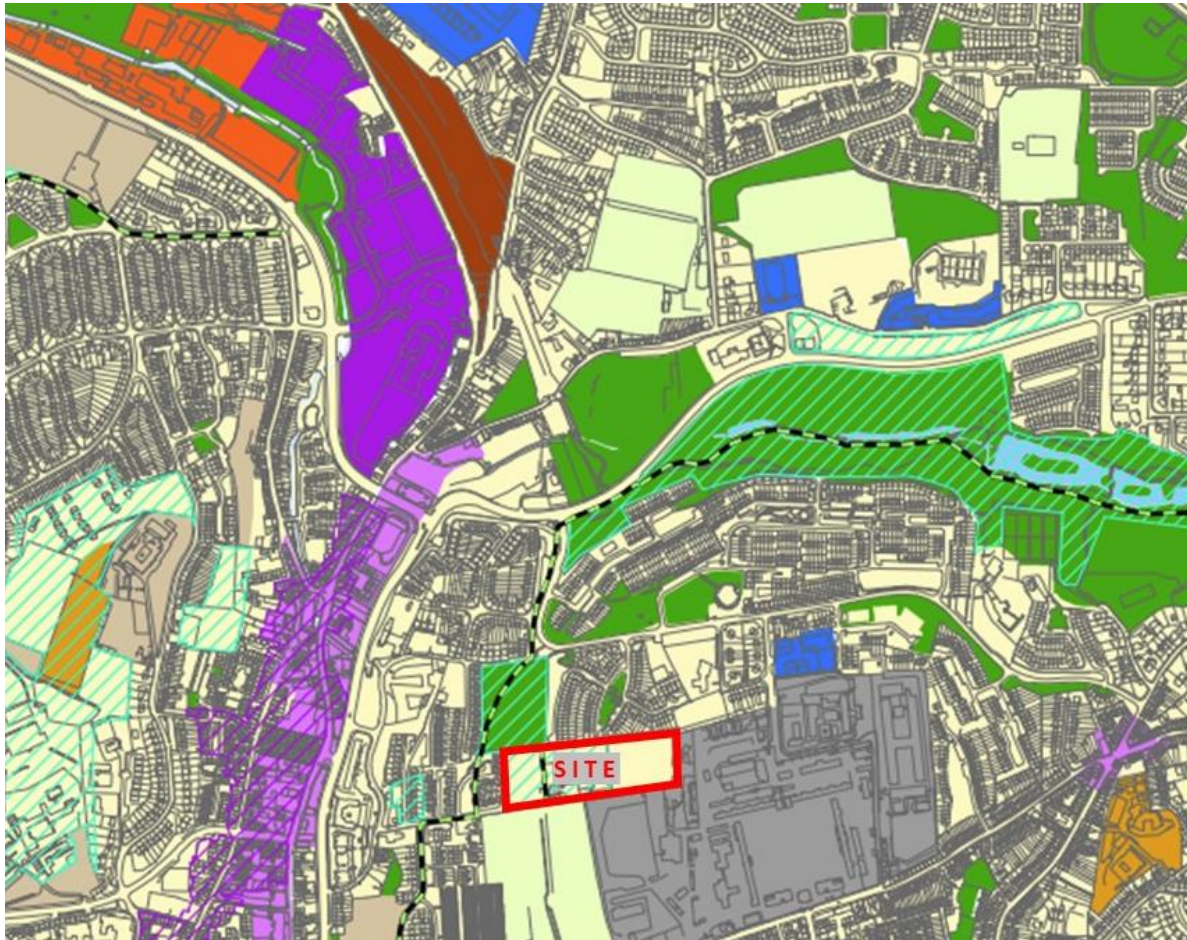
Green and Blue Infrastructure, Open Space and Biodiversity Development Objectives:

6.21 *Areas of High Landscape Value comprise one or more landscape assets identified in the Cork Landscape Study 2008 and typically, combine one of the primary landscape assets (Topography, River Corridor, Tree Cover) with other landscape assets. AHLV are illustrated in mapped objectives.*

6.22 *Areas of High Landscape Value display an intrinsic landscape character and a special amenity value. Development will be appropriate only where it results in a neutral / positive impact on the landscape. Although many AHLV consist of a built form and a strong landscape character, typically the built form is secondary to the landscape character.*

6.23 *New development in AHLV must respect the character and the primacy and dominance of the landscape. In particular, development on topographical assets such as steep sided slopes, escarpments and ridges is considered to be inappropriate due to the detrimental impact of site and excavation works on the landscape. There will be a presumption against development where it causes significant harm or injury to the intrinsic character of the Area of high Landscape Value.*

6.24 The AHLV is an additional objective overlaying the land-use zoning objective. The key areas include the Montenotte/Tivoli Ridge; Shanakiel Ridge/Sunday's Well Ridge; Blackpool Valley; Lough Mahon/Douglas Estuary; Ricer Lee/Curaheen River.



Legend

Walkways & Cycleways	ZO 16, Sports Grounds and Facilities	ZO 08, Neighbourhood and Local Centres
Area of High Landscape Value	ZO 15, Public Open Space	Architectural Conservation Area
ZO 01, Sustainable Residential	ZO 13, Institutions and Community	ZO 07, District Centre

Objective 6.5: Trees & Urban Woodland

a. To protect and enhance the City's tree and urban woodlands in public and private ownership. Cork City Council will seek to survey, map and maintain existing important individual and groups of trees, using Tree Preservation Orders as appropriate.

d. To support retaining existing trees and the planting of new trees as part of new developments subject to care on the species of tree and the siting and management of the trees to avoid conflict with transport safety and residential amenity in particular.

e. To promote the planting of pollinator friendly native deciduous trees and shrubs

Objective 6.9: Landscape

a. To preserve and enhance Cork's landscape character, key landscape assets and views and prospects of special amenity value.

b. Landscape will be an important factor in all development proposals, ensuring that a proactive view of development is undertaken while maintaining respect for the environment and heritage generally in line with the principle of sustainability.

c. To ensure that new development meets the highest standards of placemaking, siting and design.

d. To protect those prominent open hilltops, valley sides and ridges that define the character of the Cork City Hinterland and those areas which form strategic, largely undeveloped gaps between the main Hinterland settlements from development.

e. To discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments.

f. To support, as appropriate, any relevant recommendations contained in the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025.

Objective 6.11: Landscape and Development

To ensure that the management of development throughout Cork City will have regard for the value of the landscape, its character, distinctiveness and sensitivity in order to minimize the visual and environmental impact of development, particularly in designated areas of high landscape value where higher development standards (layout, design, landscaping, materials) are required.

Objective 6.13: Areas of High Landscape Value

To conserve and enhance the character and visual amenity of Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV) through the appropriate management of development, in order to retain the existing characteristics of the landscape, and its primary landscape assets. Development will be considered only where it safeguards to the value and sensitivity of the particular landscape. There will be a presumption against development where it causes significant harm or injury to the intrinsic character of the Area of High Landscape Value and its primary landscape assets, the visual amenity of the landscape; protected views; breaks the existing ridge silhouette; the character and setting of buildings, structures and landmarks; and the ecological and habitat value of the landscape.

Objective 6.22: Natural Heritage and Biodiversity

a. To protect, promote and enhance Cork City's natural heritage and biodiversity.

b. To support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Plan and the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and successor publications in Cork City.

c. To support and implement the biodiversity actions from the Cork City Heritage and Biodiversity Plan (2021-2026) in partnership with all relevant stakeholders.

e. Cork City Council will seek the enhancement of existing, and the delivery of new, biodiversity-rich areas throughout the City including individual buildings, streets, public and private spaces by supporting the provision of green roofs and walls, rain gardens, biodiversity-rich parklets, rainwater harvesting, natural banks and naturalised SUDS.

f. Cork City Council will seek, where appropriate, to enhance the linear habitat connectivity, including the interconnection and enhancement of:

- Woodlands, gardens, open spaces, fields and hedgerows.*
- Coastal habitats, river catchments, lakes, streams, ponds.*
- Aquatic, marginal and bank side habitats.*
- Parks, playing fields and recreational areas.*

- *Upstream of mapped flood*

Objective 6.25: Non-designated Areas of Biodiversity Importance

Cork City Council will seek to map the City's ecological networks and corridors of local biodiversity value outside of designated areas, and to work with local stakeholders in supporting the effective management of features which are important for wild flora and fauna and habitats.

Strategic Objective 9: Environmental Infrastructure

To develop a compact, sustainable City by ensuring the creation of attractive, liveable, diverse, safe, secure and welcoming and well-designed urban places, communities and neighbourhoods that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.

Proposals for new development will follow a design-led approach with sustainable, high-quality, climate resilient placemaking at its core. Development should have a positive contribution to its receiving environment delivered by innovative architectural, landscape and urban design, that respects the character of the neighbourhood, create a sense of place, and provide green spaces and community and cultural amenities commensurate with the nature and scale of the development.

Chapter 11: Placemaking and Managing Development

Development and Landscape, Natural Environment and Biodiversity

11.220: *New development shall be sensitively designed to fit the existing landscape setting, using high quality design and where necessary, landscape mitigation measures that maintain or enhance the landscape.*

11.222: *All development proposals are expected to:*

1. Avoid, or as a last resort satisfactorily mitigate, adverse impacts on existing designated and non-designated habitats. This is in addition to the Appropriate Assessment requirement relating to designated sites.

2. Integrate provision for biodiversity enhancement which may include compliance through public open space, gardens, areas of planting (pollinator friendly planting and native tree species should be prioritised), sustainable urban drainage systems, incorporating green roofs, bee hotels, bird and bat boxes.

3. Avoid adverse impacts, incapable of satisfactory avoidance or mitigation, on mature trees, protected flora, animal or bird species.

1.5 The Site



Figure 1.5: Site Location Map

(Source: Google Earth)

1.5.1 Description of Site

The subject site is located on the upper eastern slopes of Blackpool Valley and accessed from the North City Link Road via Assumption Road and Pope's Road. The site slopes upward from +58m O.D. along the western boundary to +79m O.D. along the eastern boundary.

The site comprises two open fields of unmanaged grass sward to either side of a centralised area of scrub vegetation. Site boundary vegetation consists of a mixture of trees and hedgerows concentrated along the northern and eastern boundaries, with some additional sparse vegetation occurring along the southern and western boundaries. The site has an isolated character given its discrete cul-de-sac access and the screening effect associated with the boundary vegetation. The site elevation facilitates views across the wider valley landscape.



Plate 1.5.1 View toward eastern site boundary from centre of site



Plate 1.5.2 View of northern boundary (eastern portion)



Plate 1.5.3 View south-eastward showing boundary vegetation and adjoining buildings



Plate 1.5.4 View along upper portion of southern boundary



Plate 1.5.5 View west from elevated part of site



Plate 1.5.6 Existing low value scrub vegetation



Plate 1.5.7 View along lower portion of southern boundary



Plate 1.5.8 View along western boundary of site



Plate 1.5.9 View along northern boundary of site



Plate 1.5.10 View of scrub vegetation located on middle portion of site

1.5.2 Local Landscape Character

The local area has a strong residential character with extensive existing housing development extending along the valley slopes, notably to the north and west of the subject site (Refer to photo 1.5.5 below). Access to the housing areas is accommodated along steep access roads which facilitate panoramic views across the wider valley landscape where vantage points occur. Buildings at Collins Barracks are prominent at the top of the ridge to the east of the site while the Christian Brothers College rugby grounds are located immediately to the south of the subject site on the opposite side of Pope's Road. Views across the valley landscape reveal extensive urban/suburban development which is punctuated by church spires, areas of tree cover and a range of green spaces.



Plate 1.5.5 Panoramic view showing the nature of development across Blackpool Valley



Plate 1.5.6 Adjoining Gleantrasna housing estate to the north of the subject site



Plate 1.5.7 View south-westward from adjoining Gleantrasna housing estate



Plate 1.5.8 View eastward toward the subject site along Pope's Road

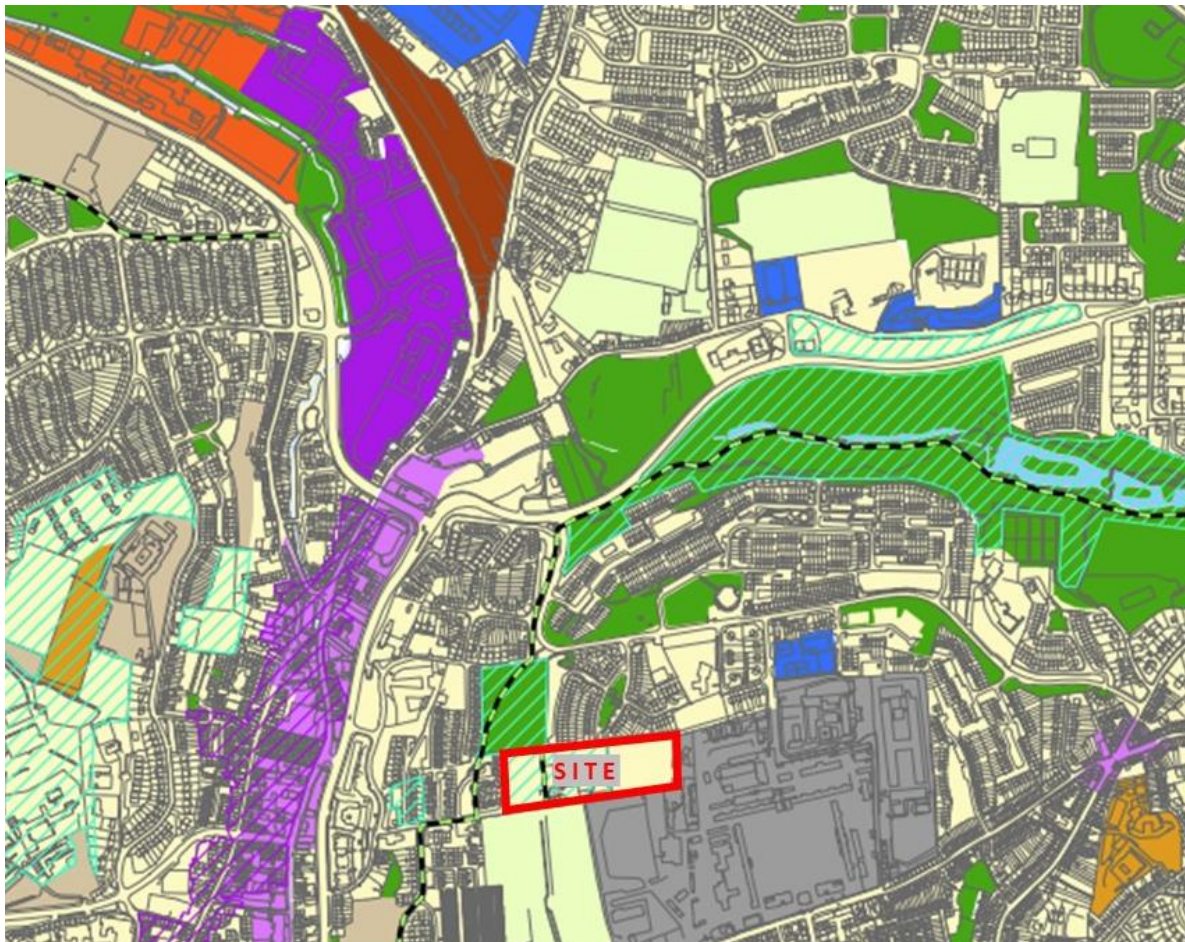


Plate 1.5.9 View westward across the local valley landscape from Pope's Road



Plate 1.5.10 View eastward across the adjoining housing area on Pope's Road

1.5.3 Zoning and Landscape Designations



Legend

Walkways & Cycleways	ZO 16, Sports Grounds and Facilities	ZO 08, Neighbourhood and Local Centres
Area of High Landscape Value	ZO 15, Public Open Space	Architectural Conservation Area
ZO 01, Sustainable Residential	ZO 13, Institutions and Community	ZO 07, District Centre

Figure 1.7: Cork City Development Plan 2022-28

1.5.4 Summary of Landscape Character and Values

- The western portion of subject site is designated as an *Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV)* which overlays a land-use zoning objective for housing which applies to the whole site. The site is elevated facilitating views across the wider valley landscape particularly from the most elevated eastern end. External views of the site are limited locally by topography and screen vegetation, while wider views of the site occasionally occur in the public domain.
- The local area has a mixed character comprised of extensive housing along the valley slopes, along with some business premises, Collins Barracks, a military cemetery and sports pitches.
- The subject site has some well-established boundary vegetation and a central area of scrub vegetation dominated by non-native Sycamore species (*Acer pseudoplatanus*).

Landscape Values

The landscape values of a site can be identified through formal designations which infer landscape value, as well as values which are not enshrined in policy but are evident on the site. These values are

listed below, and further be categorised in two ways – values which should be conserved, and those that provide opportunity for enhancement.

In addition to formal designations at international, national and local level, the GLVIA 3rd edition (2013) recommend the use of a number of criteria which can help to describe landscape values. These are listed below and include:

- *Landscape Quality/Condition*
- *Heritage/Conservation interests*
- *Scenic Quality*
- *Rarity*
- *Perceptual aspects*
- *Recreation Value*
- *Enhancement values*

Landscape Quality/Condition

The subject site has established hedgerows along some boundaries and an area of scrub vegetation in the central part of the site. The remainder of the site comprises open green areas of unmanaged grass sward

Heritage/Conservation interests

Part of the subject site is designated as an Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV).

Scenic Quality

Existing vegetation on the site contributes to green infrastructure in distant views, typically from the opposite side of Blackpool Valley.

Rarity

The site has no rare built or natural features.

Perceptual aspects

The site has limited access and is visually contained by a combination of topography, tree cover and adjoining housing estates. In distant views the vegetation cover on the site is visible.

Recreation Value

The site is private and does not have any recreational function.

Conservation Values

The conservation values reflect the need to protect and conserve existing valued elements of the natural and built environment.

- Potential to minimise the loss of existing site hedgerows and trees.
- The need to take due account of the Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) designation which exists on part of the site.

Enhancement Values

The enhancement values reflect change that is occurring in the landscape and its inherent robustness and identify elements which could be enhanced.

- The potential to demonstrate sensitive design in fulfilment of zoning objects for housing on the site as set out in Cork City Development Plan 2022-2028.

1.5.5 Zone of Visual Influence and Potential Visual Receptors

A thorough assessment of potential views of the proposed development was carried out during the site visit. The surrounding vicinity was walked and driven, and the areas with likely views were identified. Additional viewpoints were added following consultation with Cork City Council's Conservation Officer.

Locations for viewpoints identified include:

Views from the south

- View from St Ann's Bell Tower, Shandon

Views from the north

- Views from Common's Road
- Views from Gleantrasna Court
- View from Gleantrasna Crescent
- View from Military Cemetery

Views from the west

- View from St. Mary's Avenue
- View from Redemption Road
- View from Pope's Hill
- View from Pope's Road

Views from the east

- None relevant

A list of the 9 viewpoints taken to represent a variety of visual receptors in the vicinity is included in Table 1.5 below and an accompanying map showing the viewpoint locations is included in Figure 1.7, below and also in the Photomontage Booklet which accompanies this submission.



Figure 1.7: Viewpoint Location Map

(Source: Google Maps)

Viewpoint	Description	Distance to Site
1	View from St. Mary's Avenue	1.2km
2	View from St. Ann's Bell Tower	0.7km
3	View from Redemption Road	0.6km
4	View from Commons Road (N20)	0.75km
5	View from Glentrasna Court	0.06km
6	View from Glentrasna Crescent	0.07km
7	View from Military Cemetery	0.07km
8	View from Pope's Hill Housing	0.08km
9	View from Pope's Road	0.06km

Table 1.5: Viewpoints contained in Photomontage booklet.

1.6 Landscape and Visual Appraisal

1.6.1 Landscape Effects

The western portion of the subject site is designated as an *Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV)*.

Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity is considered to be Medium. Medium is described in Table 1.1 as

Areas where the landscape has certain valued elements, features, or characteristics but where the character is mixed or not particularly strong. The character of the landscape is such that there is some capacity for change in the form of development. These areas may be recognised in landscape policy at local or county level and the principal management objective may be to consolidate landscape character or facilitate appropriate, necessary change.

The western part of the proposed development site is designated as an *Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV)*. Key considerations in this respect include:-

- Visual amenity
- Protected views
- The existing ridge silhouette
- The character and setting of building structures and landmarks
- The ecological and habitat value of the landscape

Magnitude of Change

The proposed development will result in change that can be considered to be Medium. Medium is described in Table 1.2 as:

Change that is moderate in extent, resulting in partial loss or alteration to key elements, features, or characteristics of the landscape, and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic in the context. Such development results in change to the character of the landscape.

Level of Landscape Effect

The landscape effect resulting from a Medium landscape sensitivity, and a Medium magnitude of change, is considered to be **Moderate**. Within the subject site, the development will incur inevitable change transforming the greenfield site to a new residential neighbourhood.

In terms of **visual amenity** the loss of existing scrub vegetation from part of the site will reduce tree cover on this part of the valley ridge, however, the scrub is considered to be of low ecological value. Visually, it will have relatively low-level effect in distant views across the valley.

There will be no effect on any of the **protected views** (Strategic Linear Views) contained in Cork City Council's View Management Framework.

In respect of the **existing ridge silhouette** there will be some relatively low-level visual effects experienced which will be mitigated by the use of dark roofing materials and the proposed site boundary planting as it matures in the medium to long-term.

There will be no adverse effects on local **building structures or landmarks** in line with the comments above regarding protected views.

The **ecological and habitat value of the site** will be addressed by retaining existing site boundary trees and hedgerows and implementing supplemental planting along the boundaries as well as across public open spaces, gardens and streets with an emphasis on the use of native and pollinator species.

Retaining structures which are required at the eastern end of the site will also be delivered as green retaining walls.

Qualitatively the overall landscape effect is considered to be **Neutral**.

1.6.2 Visual Effects

Photomontages

Based on the desk study, review of the proposed development, site characteristics and sensitivity, as well as and visibility of the site, nine representative viewpoints (listed in Table 1.6) were selected to assist in the appraisal of visual effects. The photomontages were prepared by Pedersen Focus. These are described below, and existing photographs and proposed photomontages are provided in a separate booklet.

Each viewpoint is described below in two parts, firstly its existing (baseline) condition, and secondly to describe the predicted effects or change brought about by the proposed development in both summer and winter views.

Viewpoint 1 - View from St. Mary's Avenue

Existing View

The view eastward from this elevated location shows extensive residential development across the local suburban valley landscape. The subject site is visible on the distant valley ridge among the houses and tree cover. Buildings at Collins Barracks are visible on the skyline and Christian Brothers College sports pitches are visible to the right of the subject site.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily road users and pedestrians who are considered to be of Low and High sensitivity respectively.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development is located on the distant ridge integrated among surrounding developments. It is visible but not intrusive in the context of the pattern of existing development along the urban ridge landscape.

The magnitude of change is considered Medium. Medium is defined as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral**. In the medium to long-term the effect is also considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral**.

The proposed development will be well-integrated on the ridge facilitated by the careful consideration of material finishes in elevations including and the use of dark roofing tiles. Remedial mitigation is provided in the form of comprehensive tree planting across the site which will have an enhanced softening effect as trees and hedgerows mature in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 2 - View from St Ann's Church Bell Tower

Existing View

The view north-eastward shows the suburban landscape character of the local valley which is characterised by extensive residential development interspersed with green spaces and areas of tree cover. Collins Barracks is visible on the valley ridgeline to the right of the view while Heineken brewery dominates the foreground.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will primarily be visitors to the bell tower who are considered to be of High sensitivity.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development is visible on the upper slopes of the suburban landscape. Part of the proposed development appears on the skyline. The development appears contiguous with existing adjoining housing areas to the west of the subject site.

The magnitude of change is considered Medium. Medium is defined as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral/Slight Adverse**. In the medium to long-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral** as remedial mitigation measures take effect.

The upper part of proposed development will be prominent by virtue of its elevated position where it will partially break the skyline. The development is positioned, however, at a lower level than the buildings on the Collins Barracks site to the right of the subject site. Remedial mitigation is provided in the use of dark roofing materials and a change in the materiality to two of the more prominent gable ends from render to brick. Remedial mitigation will be provided in the form of tree and hedgerow planting along the southern site boundary which will screen and further integrate the development in the setting as it matures in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 3 - View from Redemption Road

Existing View

The view eastward from this elevated location shows extensive residential development across the local suburban valley landscape. The subject site is visible on the distant valley ridge among the houses and tree cover. Buildings at Collins Barracks are prominent on the skyline and Christian Brothers College sports pitches are visible to the right of the subject site.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily road users and pedestrians who are considered to be of Low and High sensitivity respectively.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development is located on the distant ridge integrated among surrounding developments above and below it. It is visible but not intrusive in the context of the pattern of development across the valley ridge where the pattern of development will remain as a mosaic of development, tree cover and green spaces. Collins Barracks will remain the dominant feature on the skyline.

The magnitude of change is considered Medium. Medium is defined as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral**. In the medium to long-term the effect is also considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral**.

The proposed development will be visible but well-integrated on the ridge among existing development in the locality. Reduction mitigation is provided in the use of dark roofing materials and a change in the materiality to two of the more prominent gable ends from render to brick. Remedial mitigation is provided in the form of comprehensive tree planting across the site which will have an enhanced softening effect as trees and hedgerows mature in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 4 - View from Commons Road (N20)

Existing View

The view southward from the busy N20 junction shows Blackpool shopping centre and the eastern slopes of the Blackpool Valley comprised of extensive residential development interspersed with tree cover. Collins Barracks is visible on the distant skyline in close proximity to the subject site.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily road users and pedestrians who are considered to be of Low and High sensitivity respectively.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The profile of the proposed development will be visible from this location revealing the manner in which it is cut into the topography in line with the prevailing pattern of development in the suburban valley landscape. The level of residential development will increase while the overall mosaic of development and tree cover will prevail.

The magnitude of change is considered Medium. Medium is defined as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral/Slight Adverse**. In the medium to long-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral** as remedial mitigation measures take effect.

The proposed development will be visible on the elevated site but at a lower level than the buildings on the Collins Barracks site at the top of the ridge. Reduction mitigation is provided in the use of dark roofing materials and a change in the materiality to two prominent gable ends from render to brick. Remedial mitigation will be provided in the form of tree and hedgerow planting on the site which will screen and further integrate the development in the setting as it matures in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 5 - View from Glentrasna Court

Existing View

The view south-westward toward the subject site shows the local residential street and an adjacent field with a palisade boundary fence. An established hedgerow along the northern boundary of the subject site is visible in the middle ground.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily road users and pedestrians who are considered to be of Low and High sensitivity respectively.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development will be partially visible to the rear of existing houses on the street but not intrusive in the context of the pattern of local development.

The magnitude of change is considered Low. Low is defined as:

Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral**. In the medium to long-term the effect is also considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral**.

The proposed development will be partially visible to the rear of the houses along Glentrasna Court but will not be imposing in the overall context of the street environment and existing housing on higher ground to the left of the view. Remedial mitigation is provided in the form of tree planting on the site which will have an enhanced softening effect as the trees mature in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 6 - View from Glentrasna Crescent

Existing View

The view southward shows the local cul-de-sac street and vegetation on the subject site behind the wall at the end of the street.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily local residents and visitors to the park who are considered to be of High sensitivity.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development will be visible with one prominent unit to the left revealing the variation in levels between the two sites. The proposed development will incur a level of change generally commensurate with adjoining housing sites.

The magnitude of change is considered Medium. Medium is defined as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral**. In the medium to long-term the effect is also considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral**.

The proposed development will be visible with one prominent unit to the left revealing the variation in levels between the two sites. Remedial mitigation is provided in the form of hedge planting along the site boundary which will have an enhanced softening effect as it matures in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 7 - View from Military Cemetery

Existing View

The view southward shows the lawns and tree within the military cemetery and vegetation in the background which is located on the adjoining subject site.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily pedestrians visiting the amenity spaces in cemetery who are considered to be of High sensitivity.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development will be evident while being screened substantially by existing and proposed tree cover. This will bring a sense of passive supervision given the variation in topography between the two sites. The development will not substantially alter the character of the green space or affect its function.

The magnitude of change is considered Medium. Medium is defined as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral**. In the medium to long-term the effect is also considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral**.

The proposed development will be evident but largely screened from view by existing tree cover. Remedial mitigation is provided in the form of tree planting which will have an enhanced softening effect as it matures in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 8 - View from Pope's Hill Housing

Existing View

The view eastward across the residential car park shows an existing housing cluster which backs onto the subject site. The subject site is screened from view, with some of the vegetation on the site partially visible to the rear of the houses.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily local residents who are considered to be of High sensitivity.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development will be partially visible to the rear of the existing Pope's Hill houses but visual effects will be at a low level as demonstrated by the photomontage. The magnitude of change is considered Low. Low is defined as:

Minor intrusion of the development into the view, or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in minor alteration to the composition and character of the view but no change to visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral**. In the medium to long-term the effect is also considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral**.

The proposed development will be partially visible to the rear of the existing Pope's Hill houses but visual effects will be at a low level as demonstrated by the photomontage. Reductive/avoidance mitigation was applied during the design process by means of a reduction to the height of Block A. Remedial mitigation is provided in the form of tree planting along the boundary of the subject site which will have an enhanced softening effect as the trees mature in the medium to long term.

Viewpoint 9 - View from Pope's Road

Existing View

The view eastward shows existing houses which front onto Pope's Road. Part of the subject site is visible the end of the cul-de-sac covered in scrub vegetation. The narrow lane which provides access to the site is just visible to the right where the road terminates.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewers will be primarily be local residents who are considered to be of High sensitivity.

Proposed View - Magnitude of Change

The proposed development will be prominent but will sit comfortably as an extension to the existing street.

The magnitude of change is considered Medium. Medium is defined as:

Partial intrusion of the development in the view, or introduction of elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the context, resulting in change to the composition but not necessarily the character of the view or the visual amenity.

Visual Effect

In the short-term the effect is considered to be **Moderate**, and the quality of the effect **Neutral**. In the medium to long-term the effect is also considered to be **Moderate** and the quality of the effect **Neutral**.

Part of the proposed development will be evident but otherwise screened from view by the existing houses in the foreground. Reductive/avoidance mitigation was applied during the design process by means of a change in the materiality of the gable ends in the view from render to brick. The development will integrate comfortably along the street and the proposed tree planting on the site which will have an enhanced softening effect as it matures in the medium to long term.

Summary of Visual Effects

The viewpoints described above are summarised below:

Viewpoint	Description	Level of Visual Effect and Quality	
		Short Term	Medium to Long Term
1	View from St. Mary's Avenue	Moderate (neutral)	Moderate (neutral)
2	View from St. Ann's Bell Tower	Moderate (slight adverse/neutral)	Moderate (neutral)
3	View from Redemption Road	Moderate (neutral)	Moderate (neutral)
4	View from Commons Road (N20)	Moderate (slight adverse/neutral)	Moderate (neutral)
5	View from Glentrasna Court	Moderate (neutral)	Moderate (neutral)

6	View from Glentrasna Crescent	Moderate (neutral)	Moderate (neutral)
7	View from Military Cemetery	Moderate (neutral)	Moderate (neutral)
8	View from Pope's Hill Housing	Moderate (neutral)	Moderate (neutral)
9	View from Pope's Road	Moderate (neutral)	Moderate (neutral)

Table 1.6: Summary of Visual Effects at Viewpoints

1.6.3 Cumulative Effect

There are no current or imminent proposed developments in the vicinity of the subject site for consideration under potential cumulative impacts.

1.6.4 Mitigation and Enhancement

Avoidance mitigation includes the careful consideration of scale and height in the context of the receiving environment and the selection of colour finishes for elevations and roof structures which assist integration in the challenging sloping topography of the subject site. Remedial mitigation is provided in the form of tree and hedgerow planting on the site, to supplement existing retained trees and hedgerows, which will provide screening and have a softening effect as it matures in the medium to long term.

1.6.5 Summary

1.6.5.1 Landscape Effects

The landscape effect resulting from a Medium landscape sensitivity, and a Medium magnitude of change, is considered to be **Moderate**. Within the subject site, the development will incur inevitable change transforming the greenfield site to a new residential neighbourhood.

In terms of **visual amenity** the loss of existing scrub vegetation from part of the site will reduce tree cover on this part of the valley ridge, however, the scrub is considered to be of low ecological value. Visually, it will have relatively low-level effect in distant views across the valley.

There will be no effect on any of the **protected views** (Strategic Linear Views) contained in Cork City Council's View Management Framework.

In respect of the **existing ridge silhouette** there will be some relatively low-level visual effects experienced which will be mitigated by the use of dark roofing materials and the proposed site boundary planting as it matures in the medium to long-term.

There will be no adverse effects on local **building structures or landmarks** in line with the comments above regarding protected views.

The **ecological and habitat value of the site** will be addressed by retaining existing site boundary trees and hedgerows and implementing supplemental planting along the boundaries as well as across public open spaces, gardens and streets with an emphasis on the use of native and pollinator species. Retaining structures which are required at the eastern end of the site will also be delivered as green retaining walls.

Qualitatively the overall landscape effect is considered to be **Neutral**.

1.6.5.2 Visual Effects

The visual effects associated with the proposed development are found to be **Moderate** for all views, 1 to 9.

The quality of short-term visual effects is found to be **Neutral** for views 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 and **Neutral / Slight Adverse** for views 2 and 4.

The quality of medium to long-term visual effects is found to be **Neutral** for all views 1 to 9.

The *slight adverse* short-term findings associated with views 2 and 4 relates to the prominence of parts of the development in those views. The visual effect is partially mitigated by the use of dark roofing materials while remedial mitigation in the form of tree and hedgerow planting on the site will screen and eliminate the slight adverse effects as the planting matures in the medium to long-term.

Otherwise, the neutral visual affects associated with the majority of the viewpoints demonstrate the design qualities of the development and the careful consideration given to the site layout, the positioning of the houses, the selection of materials and finishes, the retention of existing site boundary hedgerows and the comprehensive planting strategy across open spaces, streets, gardens and site boundaries.

The neutral effects on the *Area of High Landscape Value* (AHLV) associated with the western part of the site are addressed in section 1.6.5.1 above.

There will be no visual effects arising in respect of the strategic views or landmarks identified in Cork City Council's View Management Framework.

The above findings demonstrate the capacity of the site to accommodate the proposed development in line with the zoning aspirations of the site while having due regard for the Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) designation associated with the western part of the site.